

How Does Your Farm Culture Measure Up?



Operations Managers Conference

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Bilingual Dairy Specialist

The Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team is a Cornell Cooperative Extension partnership between Cornell University and the CCE Associations in 10 counties.



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What's the Difference?

Farm A

- 6, 12-hr shifts/wk.
- Double 10 herringbone
- Milking 600 cows
- Pay starts at minimum wage
- Housing near farm
- **Revolving door**

Farm B

- 6, 12-hr shifts/wk.
- Double 10 herringbone
- Milking 600 cows
- Pay starts at minimum wage
- Housing near farm
- **Steady crew**

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What's the Difference?

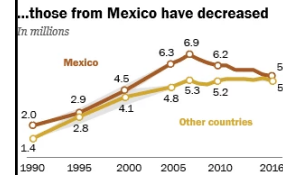
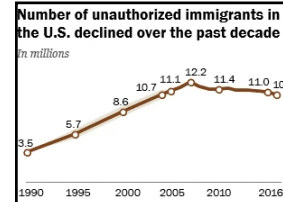
- How boss interacts with employees
- How coworkers treat one another
- Cleanliness of working conditions
- Job performance feedback
- Communication around job tasks
- Team environment
-CULTURE

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Plan for Today

- What is workplace culture?
- Assessing workplace culture
- Improving workplace culture



Note: Shading shows range of estimated 90% confidence interval.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data. See Methodology for details.
U.S. Unauthorized Immigrant Total Dips to Lowest Level in a Decade

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

*<http://www.nmpf.org/files/immigration-survey-090915.pdf>

http://www.pewhispanic.org/2018/11/27/u-s-unauthorized-immigrant-total-dips-to-lowest-level-in-a-decade/pi_2018-11-27_unauthorized-immigrants_0-01/

We have a problem...

- Labor shortages
- Tight margins
- Half of all dairy workers are immigrants*

How do we fix it?

- Work visas
- Increase pay
- Improve benefits
- Assess workplace culture
- Identify areas for improvement
- Plan & implement changes



What is culture, anyways?

- “How we do things around here”
- A set of repeatable behaviors that people realize, over and over
 - Assumptions, beliefs, values, customs

<https://www.td.org/newsletters/atd-links/how-the-heck-do-i-measure-culture>

What Affects Workplace Culture?

Organization

Environment

People

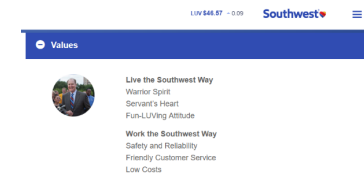


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Organizational Factors

- Mission/Vision
- Values
- Code of Conduct, aka “How We Do Things Around Here”



<http://investors.southwest.com/our-company/purpose-vision-values-and-mission>

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Environmental Factors

- Facilities
- Cleanliness
- Tools Available
- Task Focus
- People Focus



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People Factors

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Responsibility
- Support
- Wellness



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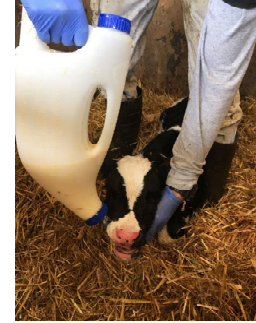
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Culture Matters

- To Employers
- To Employees
- It Affects:
 - How people feel about their job
 - How people do their job
 - How long they stay at their job

Time to Make Some Changes

1. Define your objective:
 - Better teamwork
 - Cut down on inefficiencies
 - Improved compliance w/ SOPs



2. Observe key behaviors in the workplace

- Obvious- what's needed to meet goals?
- Critical moments- underlying behaviors
- Model behaviors- star employees



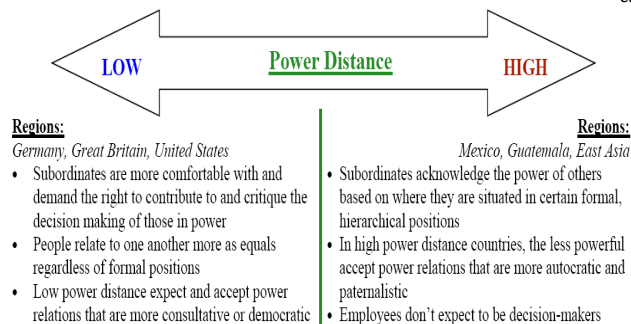
3. Replace negative behaviors with positive behaviors.

Goal: Reduce employee overlap at shift change
Clearly state your expectation (written & spoken)
State the consequences of not following
Follow through
Model w/ your own behavior

Consider other cultures

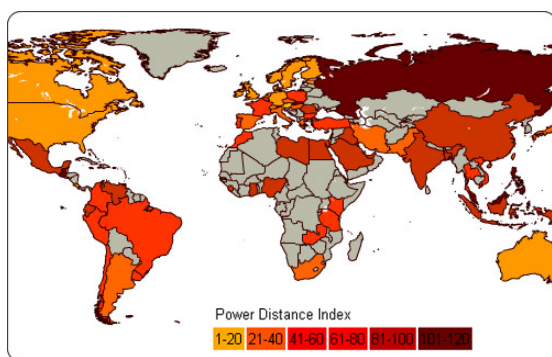
- Key differences between North American & Latin American cultures
 - Power Distance
 - Collectivism vs. Individualism
 - Uncertainty Avoidance

Adapted from Geert Hofstede's
Cultural Dynamics



Power Distance

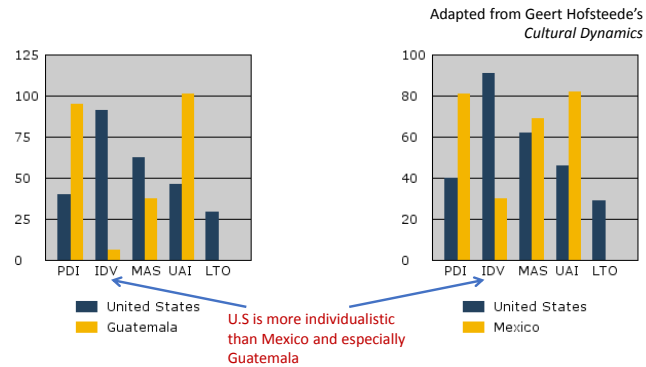
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Cultural Dynamics



Individualism/ Collectivism

- Individualism = "I"
 - **Personal needs before group needs**
 - Self-reliance, independence
 - Men, urban settings
- Collectivism = "We"
 - **Well-being of group ensures personal well-being**
 - Harmony & interdependence of group members
 - Women, rural settings

Individualism/Collectivism



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Uncertainty Avoidance

- All cultures are threatened by uncertainty
- All cultures develop norms to deal with it:
 - Technology, Laws, Religion
- HIGH: Very anxious about uncertainty so they have more laws, tendency toward conformity, predictability.
- LOW: Not as anxious about uncertainty, dislike too much structure or legislation.

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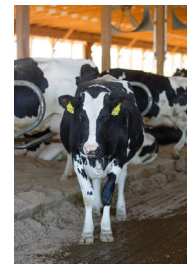
Uncertainty Avoidance

- **Guatemala** is rated at the top of the list in uncertainty avoidance
- **Mexico** isn't far behind
- Structured situations are preferred, as well as predictability
- Religion, superstitions and even fatalism can manifest themselves

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Any Objections?

- "Too much! Too fast!"
- Just pick 1!
- "Good luck getting the rest of the management on board..."
- Wait until you have a plan
- Don't say "culture"



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Culture is a set of repeatable behaviors

Tomorrow:

Pick 1 behavior

The next day:

Create plan to change behavior

Next week:

Share w/ management, gather feedback & implement